



Complaints Policy (parents/guardians)

September 2023

Next Update: September 2024

Approved by: Chair of Trustees

Principal: Neil Bain

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Introduction

The following policy and procedure are made available for use by the following people:

- Current students of Wemms Education Centre
- Parents/guardians of current students of Wemms Education Centre
- Past students and their parents/guardians of Wemms Education Centre, where the students have been on full roll with Wemms Education Centre for no less than three months from the date of the complaint and where the nature of the concern has already been brought to the attention of the school before deregistration.

1. Wemms Education Complaints Procedure

Wemms Education Centre prides itself on not just the outstanding quality of its teaching and student care but also its excellent relationship with the parents and families of its students. We consider this critical to the success and well-being of the school as a whole. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect to be treated with respect, fairness and consideration in accordance with the School's Complaints Procedure, outlined below.

2. Stage 1: Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their son/daughter's Teacher using their school email address. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means, to the parents' satisfaction. Should parents wish to meet the Teacher in person, the request should be submitted by email. The Teacher will aim to meet the parents as soon as reasonably possible, given their timetable constraints.

If the Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Principal.

Complaints made directly to the Principal will usually be referred to the relevant Teacher unless the Principal deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.

The Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 10 school days or in the event that the Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure. A school day is defined as Monday to Friday during the normal published term dates of the school, excluding public and bank holidays. The normal operating hours of the school day are from 8.30am to 4.00pm.

3. Stage 2: Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Principal. The Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Principal will speak to the parents concerned, normally within 5 school days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Principal to carry out further investigations. The Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Principal, in liaison with other relevant staff, is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, and within 15 school days from

the receipt of the complaint, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Principal will also give reasons for the decision.

4. Stage 3 Where a parent is not satisfied with the Principal's response.

1. There is provision for the parent/carer to make representations to an Independent Complaints Panel. This panel will consist of:
 - a. Representatives of the school as appropriate to the concern
 - b. Two members of the Board of Trustees
 - c. An independent person of good standing from the community who is in no way involved with the daily running of the school (e.g. SMT of a neighboring school, local councilor)
2. The Parent will inform the Principal, in writing, of their wish to invoke the Complaints Panel within two school weeks of the Principal's initial response.
3. The Principal will arrange for the meeting between Parent and Panel to take place within one calendar month (notwithstanding extenuating circumstances) of receipt of this letter and will inform the parent by email, post or phone call of the arrangements.
4. It is anticipated the Parent will wish to be in attendance when the Panel meets. It is also anticipated the parent will wish to be accompanied by an independent friend/advisor. Should the parent be unable to attend on the first date offered, the Panel will be asked to postpone the meeting. If the parent is unable to attend the second date, the Panel will meet to consider the complainant's written report and will act on the information so provided to try and meet the one calendar month timeline.
5. The Panel will consider all evidence and reports and will make its findings and recommendations available to the complainant and where relevant to the person complained about, in writing, within seven working days of the meeting.
6. Simultaneously, the report will be made available to the Principal and the Trustees who will ensure a copy is placed both in the student's confidential file and the Central Confidential Complaints Record.
7. The Principal will respond to the Complaints Panel, Complainant and, if appropriate the person complained about, within five school days. This response will take the form of an action plan that identifies and actions the recommendations and findings of the panel.
8. Should the parent still feel that their grievance has not been resolved, they are advised to contact Ofsted and make their concerns known.
9. In the case of LEA-funded students, parents may also approach their caseworker for advice and support. This would normally result in a request for an Emergency Annual Review and the School would anticipate the LEA representative to be in attendance.